

Outlanders

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Summary: First Class Petty Officer Rebecca Shaw, an experienced longsword pilot responded to the call for all hands to abandon ship during the battle for Earth. Blacking out during her escape from complete genocide she finds herself in a foreign land.

Outlanders

CHAPTER ONE

Rebecca Shaw Time-Keeping, Location

1300 17/11/2552, Unknown

"Look at that!" exclaimed a stall vendor, dropping the coins a patron had just passed her as she looks in awe at the spectacle soaring towards the ground.

The busy marketplace of Kaville suddenly grew even louder as more and more people gasped at the spectacle. Across the distant mountains of the Northern Tundra it appeared as though a crumbling blue-tinted fireball was plummeting to the ground at great speed. All but a single cloaked figure was joining in on the commotion; this man stared in quiet contemplation, with a hint of sadness in his face. A sadness that has been with him for a long time. Beneath this figure's cloak only the shape of a longbow and interwoven chain-linked leather boots could be identified. Less than a minute passed before the flame had disappeared out of sight, apparently hitting the ground or dissipating before their eyes.

"It's that damned hunter Agnite again!" Yelled a heavy chainmail-donning Kaville peacekeeper.

"Surround him before he flees!" Proclaims another.

Agnite swore at himself for getting so distracted as to allow the

peacekeeper forces to spot him. Nothing he could do about it now though, already five heavily armed peacekeeper guards had him surrounded. Agnate knew close-quarters wasn't where his talent lied, but withdrew a short curved blade from the belt beneath his cloak with a determined, steely-eyed stare at the closest foe.

Rebecca lifted her drowsy eyelids to flashing crimson lights, instinctively raising a hand to cover her eyes. Blood accidentally smeared across her forehead, looking down she realizes a puncture wound to her abdomen. Vision blurred somewhat, she sees dark grey bulkheads, the inner of a ship of some kind. She must be in the cockpit as there are control panels and throttles laid out over the dashboard ahead of her. Past the dashboard through what must be thick layers of glass she only sees what appears to be distorted ice...or water, with the slight angle of her facing upwards her wandering imagination was thinking of scenarios of her being crushed by falling snow; in direct relation to a memory of her early days serving in the military. No good, head pounding in confusion she decided first priority is to deal with her injury.

Grimacing in pain the injured woman strains herself to leave the pilot's chair she initially thought would be her grave, but can only manage to get to her knees and not stand. Slowly crawling to an access panel she desperately pulls at the handle and retrieves what could easily be mistaken as a small gas canister. Flipping a lever at the top of the canister she lodges a protruding nozzle into her stomach wound; a white creamy substance begins to fill the wound, quickly settling and becoming a solid foam to seal the flesh in place. Biofoam, a tissue-regenerative coagulant commonly used for quick fixes in the United Nation Space Command armed forces. To Rebecca's disgust it doesn't really dull pain so much; as although it will hold the tissue in place and gradually allow healing, the feeling of the substance coming into contact with said flesh is often described as thousands of ravenous ants crawling around your inners.

The pain is unbearable and again she loses consciousness.

Awakening from her slumber the pain has dulled somewhat. Using one hand to wipe blood from her mouth and the other to grab a handhold to rise to her feet, she stumbles over to the flight seat. Head

still thundering Rebecca attempts to recollect her memories. UNSC Navy First Class Petty Officer Rebecca Shaw, experience Longsword pilot for a Destroyer-class vessel. The call for ship-wide evacuation was given, Rebecca was on stand-by already in her single fighter known commonly as a longsword. That was when one of the alien warriors entered her fighter, luckily just before she secured herself in the chair. Not quite remembering why, Rebecca presumed it was with the alien boarding party that infiltrated the vessel. She remembers it only carrying the race's signature crystalline cutlass melee weapon, must explain how she woke with the bloody abdomen. A quick scan of the cabin she sees no dead body, but surely she defeated her enemy somehow?

Scanners; dead. Engines; dead. Life-support; running at minimal efficiency. It becomes clear to her now that her front-end has lodged into ice, but from whence this ice comes from? An asteroid? Planet? With no scanners it's like being both deaf and blind to what's surrounding the Longsword. She hates such a feeling of insecurity.

Must investigate; but feeling very weak still, quite likely still suffering from a concussion as well, she can't quite bring herself to leave the pilot's chair. The next few hours are spent recuperating, but not sleeping; checking her wrist pad, a small electronic multi-purpose device, she figures she was sleeping for around 25 hours. Almost an entire day in her home planet's day cycle. She spent her time checking and rechecking the scanner drives, hoping to get something, anything useful out of her ship. 'Her' ship, she would always call it, seeing many victories, and losses, with this particular ship. Rebecca has fought long and hard to keep hold of the same ship, despite transfers, damages done.

Gathering her strength, she rises from the chair to walk over to the communications access panel, checking and re-wiring, eventually giving up to approach another small panel which is a simple wash area. Looking back at her in a small mirror is a blood-stained face, from both the struggle against her unwanted visitor and the accidental wiping of her own hand across her cheek. Using a pack of wipes she spent a couple minutes wiping herself clean and securing her usually unnaturally jet black shoulder-cropped hair into a short back ponytail; not bothering to be particularly neat however it was only a partial job, leaving collections of strands still hanging down the sides slightly ahead of her dainty ears. Looking beyond Rebecca's minor 'laughter lines' bought on by over a decade of military service and her modestly middle-age of 37, as well as a small scar across the left side of her upper cheek bone; her oval facial structure, full lips and emerald green eyes have often been said to betray her otherwise tough outward presence of a confident career-navy woman.

Slight sweat drops forming on her brow she figures the temperature-control is surprisingly not out of order, but clearly malfunctioning. Enough straining for now, still feeling the paining stomach wound; Rebecca begins stripping off her flight suit. |Extra care being taken to remove the flight jacket and black vest underneath; revealing a lean, rather muscular figure standing at 5'10" that could intimidate any man. She grabs a fresh vest from the wash station and removes her trousers, now donning only a plain black vest and shorts she glances quickly at scars from close encounters with plasma burns, several lining her left arm and both legs. Memories flooding back, a hint of remorse replaces her expression of pain. Still need more rest, without proper medical attention, the biofoam formula is still capable of completely closing a wound and allowing tissue reconstruction, but it is a very slow and painful process.

****CHAPTER TWO****

Rebecca Shaw Time-Keeping, Location

2300 21/11/2552, Northern Tundra

Ice. Nothing but ice, for miles. An open plain of ice with patches of snow is all that Rebecca can see as she scrambles up the southern side of the trench dug out by the Longsword as it hit; with mountainous peaks to the north. Examining the destruction she'd caused to the landscape she remembers blacking out as the wrecked Longsword descended. What is strange though, Rebecca doesn't recall entering atmosphere, just...appearing in the upper atmosphere of this unknown world. Examining the skies, it appears just like any standard

human-friendly atmosphere she's visited before; Eridanus, Reach, Earth. The mentally war-torn soldier instantly puts such memories of these now destroyed worlds at the back of her mind.

Rebecca returns her attention back to the seemingly endless trench her ship had dug into the landscape during the hellish landing. It trails in from the north-east, arching towards the distant mountains. Rebecca had to trek up seven meters of steep molten ice, wading from the ship's ramp through waist high water. She thinks to herself it's quite lucky that the ice, melted by the Longsword's landing, hadn't re-solidified. The scene was quite beautiful, the wingspan of the ship had created a 23 meter wide embankment with varied levels of pooling.

Turning back to ship however, the view is spoilt by a charcoaled heap of metal front-end dug into the tundra. Doesn't make sense, Rebecca's lack of a memory of atmosphere entry betrayed how burnt up the exterior of her Longsword appeared.

**::longsword description:**

She stand upon an ice mound, clad in her spare full-flight uniform. If there's anything Rebecca has learnt during her seventeen years of piloting, it's that one should always stock their ship with as much as they can get away. And this soldier has never been against hoarding the occasional contraband. Always one to prepare for anything, she's always made sure to request the non-standard survival-grade (s/G) flight suit, specially designed for those pilots on missions where being stranded ground side is always a possibility. In the few times she had been ground ssde and by herself she had always been glad to make the effort too. All UNSC standard flight-suits are completely vacuum sealed with full-visored helmet is attached, but the s/G variant included internal temperature-control and kevlar interwoven into vital areas, while also being form-fitting to minimise mobility restraints. Unfortunate that Rebecca was never able to grab hold of one of the snow-camo uniforms, her profile will stick out quite a bit in the solid grey of the s/G variant.

One last glance back at the ship, Rebecca places a small pineapple-shaped remote senser into the ground and activates a small dial. The sensor's lower portion began drilling through the tundra floor, it'll reach three meters then stop, this'll allow Rebecca to find the location of her ship using her built-in wrist data pad. One final check to make sure her data pad is synched with the remote sensor, she begins her long trek towards what she hopes is a sign of civilization. Using an Oracle Scope usually attached to high-powerful sniper rifles Rebecca was able to see forestation to the south, with multiple faint smoke trails. An approximate twenty-three mile trek towards the forest edge, through desolate tundra landscapes. She sets out.

"Oh oh oh this is gonna be something good, it's gotta be something good."

Mikael has often been told he talks too much, the fact that he feels the need to vocalize even when completely alone in the Northern Tundra is evidence of this. But today, this adventurer has a reason to be excited. For you see, Mikael knows about the blue-tinted fireballs that have very occasionally plummeted to the ground throughout history; more importantly, he knows of the treasures that

accompany such an event. He's been called many things; treasure-hunter, grave-robber, tomb-raider. This is how Mikael keeps his stomach full, and his equipment in decent condition. Mostly, it's for the sense of adventure, he's known nothing else in life for a long time.

"Hmm, not from anywhere I know of." the adventurer says to no one as he stands atop the embankment of a seemingly recently formed shallow river, wide eyes focused on what he sees as a miraculous discovery where the river ends.

Responding to her remote sensor alarm beeping from her data pad Rebecca detours to the nearest raised tundra formation. A slow jog to the elevated ground allows her to see the slight speck of the Longsword's tail jutting out above the unnaturally formed trench. Focusing her Oracle Scope in that direction she's able to easily make out a figure covered in thick furs. From it's stance this is clearly a bipedal creature, but the thick furs prevent further identification; it's at least standing upright. And has a well-shaped metal tipped spear jutting out the top of the furs covering the back of this creature.

Theories flooding through her head, she sits for a quick rest. The still-aching pilot has travelled eight miles. Is the figure studying her Longsword a human? Is she simply stranded on a remote settlement outside of UNSC space that was simply forgotten about? Suffering from such harsh conditions it hasn't been unheard of for distant colonies to have to resort to more barbaric ways of living, could explain the messy heaps of furs being used for warmth. Her thoughts then switch to possible aliens, creatures that have evolved independently on this planet. Standing back up after only a few minutes, Rebecca decides the figure is not a large enough threat to the ship for her to abandon her journey to the forestation.

After some thought before leaving the ship, Rebecca decided to travel light, risking not having the needed equipment, but also meaning she's able to cover more ground in haste. A single M6A ship-hull friendly pistol and an M7 caseless sub-machine gun strapped to either thigh, along with a 9" serrated single-edged knife holstered above the left ankle. As well as a still rather large-sized pack full of survival tools. Should be enough to deal with any local non-industrialized inhabitants.

Just an approximate two miles left before Rebecca reaches the tree-line she removes an **MRE (describe)** from her pack. The pilot packed enough to sustain herself for just 72 hours. After consuming the dry, dull-flavoured foodstuffs she takes a few sips of clean water from her pack's hydro-container. It was the first time she'd felt the cold of this icy environment, not wasting any time Rebecca quickly secured her helmet; back to the warmth of her internal temperature control.

Dusk approaches, the distant star falling over the northern horizon over the mountain range. Rebecca makes a mental note of the time and will again at dawn, hoping to get an understanding of the day/night cycle of the world.

****CHAPTER THREE****

Rebecca Shaw Time-Keeping, Location

0400 22/11/2552, Barren Woods

"Troglodytes ahead." Whispered a mud-covered man, kneeling in the dirt, curved wooden bow in hand. Wearing red furs all over, strapped together with simple strings.

"We must head back, Johansen." Said another similarly dressed hunter.

"We have come this far, brother, do you not wish to test our training?"

"We may have been elected to become members of the village watch, Johansen, but we have strayed too far from the village. We are being trained to defend and hunt game, not to attack roaming Troglodyte mobs."

"Bah! Where's your sense of adventure!"

"Adventure beyond our village and purpose in life? Brother, what you say is heresy!"

"Well we've gone and alerted them now anyway" Johansen said smugly, pointing towards the five Troglodyte's now stalking his and his brother's position.

As Johansen pulled back on his bowstring, his brother gasped in terror at something behind them. Glancing behind his own shoulder, Johansen's sense of adventure is quickly filled with fear, a dozen more Troglodyte's cautiously move towards their prey.

Now moving through the frozen woodland in the darkness, Rebecca is feeling heavily fatigued. Being on the move for over five hours now with minimal rests, still suffering from the minor pain after her biofoam injections.

***_**forest description:**_

Just as she lays down her pack for a rest and to give her temperature-control a break as to prevent overheating, she hears distant screaming. Exhausted, but wanting to investigate Rebecca pulls a small finger-sized cylindrical injector from her pack, gradually lifts her helmet and places the injector to her neck. Clenched jaw the pilot presses down hard with her thumb, eyelids shuddering slightly. Adrenaline-stimulation, a contraband product where she comes from, but something many pilots and long-skirmish ground soldiers have been resorting to for prolonged missions. Instantly re-securing her pack, the lone pilot un-holsters her sub-machine gun and starts a slow crouched jog south-east, towards the screams; doing her best to keep her profile low whilst also trying to keep from bending her abdomen overly as to avoid disturbing the solidly-set biofoam.

Peeking over a large fallen log towards a small clearing, Rebecca finds herself staring at a very strange scene. Only a short distance away is a battle of some sorts. The first things that comes to her attention are over a dozen hunched over, scaly humanoids with glistening scale colour's that vary between shades of green and brown. They all stand at barely five feet tall, with slender arms and

legs, which look almost comical attached to their chubbier bodies. What doesn't look comical however is the menacing grin adorned across their heads, fat round heads remind Rebecca of the great iguanas of her homeworld. Prominent features include large oval eyes with vertically stretched vibrant yellow irises, along with the aforementioned toothy grin from tiny out-ward pointing ear to ear.

These creatures were all surrounding two single humans. Rebecca was sure of it, these were humans, their bodies more tightly wrapped in muddy furs with the previous figure she spotted, though this time put together in an even messier manner. The body shape was for sure human, she thought. Then she saw one holding a short curved bow turn slightly, revealing a dirty face, but definitely a human face. She was going to need to make contact.

The scaled creatures were naked and all holding long sticks with roughly-cut stone pointy heads. Makeshift spears, very primitive, but surely dangerous against the two men holding their ground. The bowman shot an arrow towards the nearest creature, hitting it in the lower abdomen, it fell. The rest of the creatures recklessly charged. Reckless, but with such superior numbers, tactics weren't so important to overcome an enemy, Rebecca remembers this being common tactics for her race's enemy.

In a flash Rebecca started to lay down fire with her M7, quickly though she realizes these creatures have a very high pain threshold and can apparently operate with several puncture wounds to the abdomen and chest. Even the creature with an arrow sticking into it's stomach has risen back up now. Though her sub-machine gun makes short work of them, it's still an incredible waste of ammunition to mortally wound these creatures. Stepping over the log the pilot simultaneously holsters the M7 with her left hand and retrieves her slender black M6A pistol, loaded with higher calibre rounds. This was her favoured pistol model, it's actually a much older model than the standard, but it's favoured among pilots for it's less powerful velocity making it incapable of actually breaching any part of the Longsword's hull.

Breathing steadily, taking even steadier steps towards the action just a dozen meters ahead of her. Petty Officer First Class Rebecca Shaw unloads her entire clip of twelve high-caliber, armour-piercing rounds. Now this isn't a pilot that specializes in long-range high-precision ground combat at all; more used to corridor shootouts. But this pilot has had enough experience to be able to be as efficient as most 'ground pounders' with a pistol.

Seven of the creatures slump to the ground with fist-sized holes in their skull's caused by the high-caliber rounds' exit wounds. Scarlett red and purple gore splatters the snow and covers the fur hat of one of the native humans. The approaching pilot now had the full attention of both the men and the creatures.

Johansen looks on in astonishment. The moment he saw seven Troglodyte heads practically explode in front of him, bits of brain and skull splattering the back of his brother's head, he turned to see...something.

A warrior, moving with graceful steps, wearing the finest sown materials he'd ever laid eye on. Completely covered in chillingly

dark grey colours over all but where the warrior's eyes should be. Wearing a full helmet, a shining reflective silver visor wrapped around the head. Johansen's mind was leaning to thinking this warrior was a female, but unsure if it was even human.

With a single fluid motion the approaching warrior let something drop from her strange tiny mace, reached round to her back and slid in another rectangular shaped object where the previous one fell from. Further loud bangs accompanied several more Troglodyte brains blowing out. What is this warrior? A spellweaver? Never has Johansen seen his village's shaman, coincidentally also the only spellweaver of the village, perform such incredible feats as to make a dozen Troglodyte brains explode out of their skull.

Then it happened. Johansen turns to see his brother kneeling, clutching at an arrow torn through his jugular.

Rebecca is taken aback by the sudden side-blow to her head. Spotting multiple targets coming from her left in the visor's motion tracker she glances in that direction as she reaches for another ammunition clip.

More of these creatures, brandishing what look to be very messy cobbled-together crossbows. Despite higher numbers and now having ranged weaponry they still run forward towards their prey.

"Dumb shits", the soldier whispers to herself.

An opportunity for some anger-release, an important stress-reliever, as years of bloodshed had taught this war veteran. As she switches back to her rapid-fire sixty round M7 sub-machine gun the foul dwarfish monster have already covered a surprising amount of ground for their stocky legs. At such close quarters Rebecca is able to tear their heads to pieces with the M7, each enemy getting within at least three meters with her before she's finished with the last. Four fell down in a mess of their own gore in a matter of seconds, three following quickly after. Must have been a lucky shot, the glancing blow to her helmet as they initiated their surprise attack, because now being at such close range none have shown any signs of marksmanship. The occasional short wooden stick, most not even tipped with their roughly cut stones, would hit her in the body but be easily absorbed by the interwoven kevlar.

But then 'SLAM', another makeshift arrow hits her dead-centre of her visor. Not even a scratch, but disorientated enough for the same creature to make an agile and desperate leap towards her, arms limply reaching forward. A sidestep, a thin almost skeletal hand just passes Rebecca's neck, followed by a bone-crunching sound to the creature's fat skull as she pummelled it from above with 11 lbs of metal alloys. Spinning to finish off the two final death-wishers, she recalls the hardyness of such creatures so dropping to one knee as she leans down to unsheathe a combat knife, using her entire body weight she drives the deadly serrated blade into the previously downed creature's skull.

Messy, she thought to herself. But pure child's play to compared to her usual experiences.

CHAPTER FOUR

End
file.